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Letter dated from G. A. Montgomery to W. S. Featherston. 26 January 1888

G. A. Montgomery

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United States Senate,

WASHINGTON, D. C.

July 15, 1888

My Dear Sir

In answer to yours of the 10th inst. concerning your
Candidacy for the governor. I must say:
That I have always formed your selection for that high place.
I believe your public services both in present and in the past
you to be recognized as one of the most deserving of Mississippi
sons. I have expressed this opinion freely. I have said that I
esteem it ungrateful, that you should pass away, without
ever having received a just recognition of the great value of
your personal services to the state, as well as a just tribute to
your great moral worth. I entertain these sentiments now;
and if it were left to me to say who should be the next governor of
Mississippi, I would without hesitation designate you. This sentiment
I have no wish to conceal. This it will probably offend some
whose friendship I enjoy, & for whom I feel the greatest affection.
On their conflicting claims among those whom I esteem

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I have reason, even reason in this way: that you are older than the others, & that much longer delay in ascending to you ^a just recognition of your services, would in effect be a denial of them: whilst the others are young enough to wait. I think this is a just method of dealing between friends.

You have now what I think & what I feel; & you are at liberty to communicate what I have written to others.

You will have my support, as you have had, if you become a Candidate. Whether you should become a candidate or not, I am not competent to advise. Looking at the past, I submit this for your consideration. Do not announce yourself as a candidate; let your friends know you are willing to accept. Then, when there shall be an inability to nominate, owing to the multiplicity of candidates you will be a fair compromise man. Of course this will not do, if there be danger, that any one man is so likely to get so far ahead of the "magnetic mass", as to go through without harm. On this point I am

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to be Democrats. I fear, when I go back in the Summer, I will rather be
regarded, & for a politics are concerned, as an intruder - & that words of
advice will be attempted to be shown ^{to} ~~as~~ ^{the} dictation.

Outside of my old Co - through the State, there will be strong
antagonisms to me, & from influential sources. In the eyes of many I
have committed the unpardonable sin of exposing the false &
fractional nature of the American debt. I understand that an attempt
will be made to array the whole body of those who have attended the
House against me. Of course this could be done as some of them
could be led or driven against me. But you may rely on it - success
for the present will & for attend their efforts as to make my influence
in many quarters act directly against the object. Which it favors. I know
I shall be sustained by the great mass of the people of the
intelligent & thinking men: but the masses of them are not always
much effective. It may be that it will be a source of weakness
not of strength to you. I know it is known that I have you now.

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Of the house, you must judge for yourself.

I shall then continue my report by - I have
considered nothing. I will say - Be very careful about
announcing yourself as a candidate - you know the negative
probability of defeat. Watch & choose - I have friends in different
parts of the State in fact a way, as to I wrote from them
Can do expressions as to your chances. But people that men work
with for news, if they can help it, especially if they think it
will be disaffectioning.

If I have not been clear on any point, or have omitted anything - I am
asking for further information.

My eyes are still inflamed & I am doing nothing of value.
I have been sick nearly all the winter - had Catarrh - Cerebrum - headache
of severe debility: I attributed this to the cold life, & as I have
lived in a long coat - a great little collage into which I have
just moved & am now venturing from my library in the

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not able to speak directly. I know less of the inside workings of Congress
politics, than any man who has ever elected to the Senate from the State. The
men who control in politics, who are active & influential in Congress
& Congress, rather tolerate than support me. They do not ask my advice
or feel to give to others, they would rather not follow it, & would not if
they saw their way clear to do otherwise. I don't see now, that my support
will turn out any advantage to you. It may rather eventually direct
the reverse. I can't even promise you the support of my old Country.
This I shall return them to live. Long live out in Jackson. Since I
left Congress - was 15 years ago - there have been great changes. The
men who acted with me many of them are dead - & many more from
age. & circumstances have caused to take an active interest in politics.
Young men have come to the front. Some of them entire strangers to me.
& some even prejudiced against me. The negroes, against my advice, are
admitted into the Democratic primaries, & control the nominations.
They are done without ready as to that - that they should prefer me

of story.

I think I ought to add that I have great faith
in our friend Prof Watson in his candid and his good sense.
I suggest, if you are on such terms as will justify it, that
you consult him. I am sure he will give you honest
advice. Do you know Dr Thos Woods of Meriden? He is
a splendid man. He belongs to no ring. If you know
him well, consult him as to sentiment in his section.

Lamar is anxious to be compared however much delay
there may be in it.

I need be glad to hear from you at any time. There
must have been no hiatus in our correspondence (on your side) but
that I naturally shrink from facing a correspondence when I am
in public life.

To

Dr W. S. Featherston

Very truly yours

J. W. Brown